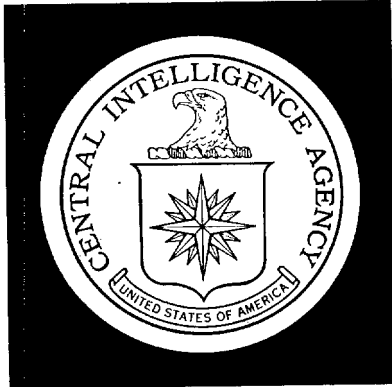


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10 September 1971

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25X1

Approved For Release 2003/05/19 : CIA-RDP79T00975A020000020002-5

10 September 1971

25X1

Central Intelligence Bulletin

CONTENTS

25X1

EAST GERMANY - WEST GERMANY: East Germans stall
talks. (Page 2)

25X1

Approved For Release 2003/05/19 : CIA-RDP79T00975A020000020002-5

25X1

25X1

Approved For Release 2003/05/19 : CIA-RDP79T00975A020000020002-5

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25X1

EAST GERMANY - WEST GERMANY: Differences over the German language text of the four-power agreement on Berlin are impeding the second phase of talks aimed at defusing the tension over the divided city.

West German negotiator Bahr broke off the East - West German session yesterday after some 40 minutes when it became evident that East German representative Kohl would not agree to resolve the issue of differing texts. Following Bahr's action, West Berlin negotiator Mueller cut short the separate inner-Berlin talks with East German representative Kohrt.

In the previous Bahr-Kohl round of 6 September, Kohl had claimed that his government's reversion to formulas consonant with Pankow's political outlook was caused by a West German breach of secrecy.

Bonn apparently hopes a firm stance on this issue will bring Soviet pressure to bear on the East Germans to return to the text agreed to on 3 September prior to the signing of the first-stage Berlin agreement. At the same time, the hitch in negotiations gives the opposition CDU a chance to ask some embarrassing questions, particularly in regard to Bahr's failure to force a showdown on the issue prior to 9 September.

Bonn's tactic will be resisted by Pankow whose leaders and press have been trumpeting their version of the text, which implies a somewhat looser connection between West Berlin and Bonn than the formulas contained in the four-power agreement. The substantive differences in the two versions are not great, however, and the West Germans could well be more concerned about the East Germans' lack of good faith. At the same time Pankow has been pressuring the West Germans to set aside such quibbling and agree to the draft treaties it has hastened to table and leave troublesome details to subsequent and separate negotiations. The East Germans are gambling that the commitment of the Brandt government's prestige to a successful outcome of the Berlin talks will force it to move on with the negotiations, allowing East Germany to translate the four-power agreement in a way most beneficial to its own interests.

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10 Sep 71 Central Intelligence Bulletin

2

25X1

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Next 3 Page(s) In Document Exempt

Approved For Release 2003/05/19 : CIA-RDP79T00975A020000020002-5

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